

THE

# MASSACHUSETTS TEACHER.

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## THE TEACHER.

WHEN we consider that there are, within the limits of our commonwealth, more than *two hundred thousand* youth, of a school-going age, whose future success, happiness, and usefulness depend, in so great a degree, upon the nature and extent of their school training and school influences, with what immense power, for good or ill, does the consideration invest the more than *six thousand* teachers who are placed over them!

We regard him as a wise and judicious husbandman who carefully removes from his grounds all noxious weeds, and who so trains his vines and trees that they will not become fruitless and useless cumberers of the soil they occupy. And if worldly wisdom and worldly sagacity prompt to so much attention and watchfulness for those objects which, like the grass of the field, fade, wither, and die, with what intense care and interest should *they* labor and watch who are called to superintend and cultivate a field so closely filled with plants whose existence is commensurate with eternity! Is it not, fellow-laborer, a work of the greatest moment rightly to guard and till this great field that all hurtful and untoward influences may be kept from these deathless plants, and that they may receive such support and training as will cause them to bear fruit which shall be to the honor and glory of the divine Teacher whose agents we are? If properly nurtured and cared for, what ornaments and blessings will they become to the hill-sides and valleys of our beloved State! If neglected or mal-trained, what curses will they prove to the gardens in which they grew, to the communities whose atmosphere they taint, and to those who should have led them to the light, but have rather left them to grope in darkness and imbibe the pestiferous influences of ignorance and wickedness! As cultivators in these priceless nurseries of God's planting, we, as teachers, have assumed a foremost rank, and

we will be pronounced against us if we, by undervaluing our work, or misapplying our time and talents, cause or allow deformities and enormities to exist and perpetuate themselves.

But we are often called upon to labor under adverse circumstances, so that our best efforts may seem powerless, and the "good we would," and for which we earnestly strive, is not secured. One of the most prominent hindrances to the more complete success of teachers may be found in the *apathy* and, sometimes, the direct *opposition* of parents. In a work of such vast magnitude as that of education, it is of the highest importance that a good understanding exist between parents and teachers, and that all their doings be characterized by harmony, mutual good will, and a singleness of purpose. Yet there is in the community a degree of indifference which is exceedingly discouraging, and, often, embarrassing to the faithful and devoted teacher,—and labors that, under favoring and favorable circumstances, might be performed with cheerfulness and efficiency are, frequently, rendered doubly arduous and less beneficial by the counteracting influences of the very persons who should ever stand ready to afford all possible aid and encouragement. Now it would seem almost absurd to deem it necessary to labor to awaken a healthful interest on the part of parents in relation to those matters which pertain to the highest good of their offspring; but though passing strange, it is nevertheless true,—and "pity 'tis 'tis true." *Why* such is the case we will not stop to discuss. Suffice it to say that in all communities there will be a great variety of parental influence and example,—some as favorable and kind as any one could wish, other as inconsiderate and valueless as possible, though not ill-intended, while other still may be found which have, apparently, emanated from the very genius of discord, mischief, and opposition. Few teachers are so happily situated as to be free from *every* unpropitious influence, and the question to be considered is,—how shall they as teachers best qualify themselves to meet these difficulties, and labor as successfully as possible in communities as they may find them? If difficulties cannot be entirely removed, how can they be mitigated, or, in part at least, neutralized? I answer, 1st. The teacher must aim to be a kind, judicious, and faithful workman in the school-room, and by earnest devotion to his duties and kindly interest in the progress and welfare of his pupils, convince those under his charge that he is their friend,—laboring for their good. This will do much to secure to him a desirable influence in the school-room, and, at the same time, afford a powerful auxiliary in his attempts to extend his influence beyond the immediate spot of his daily labors. It is almost impossible for children to feel a deep and lively interest in their school and teacher without imparting some of their interest to

their parents; and hence that teacher who wins the confidence, respect, and affection of his pupils, gains a most desirable influence that cannot readily be resisted or counteracted: and that teacher who cannot secure the esteem and confidence of his pupils may find sufficient reason for retiring from his post of labor. And, I add, a kind, dignified, independent and faithful discharge of duties will rarely, if ever, fail of gaining proper respect and trust.

2d. A teacher should endeavor so to secure the confidence and good will of the parents, for whom he labors, that they will, generally, trust to his judgment and defer to his decision. This, I am well aware, is not, in all cases, an easy matter. With many parents, perhaps we may say with *most* parents, there is a ready inclination to render the teacher of their children cheerful and prompt coöperation in every desirable particular. But it is not so with all. In every community may be found those perverse dispositions which know not what it is to lend aid in any good work. Capricious, captious, and uneasy, they can find nothing to their liking. They view all objects and operations with a jaundiced eye. With such the only desirable thing about schools is, that they are standing objects about which they may daily vent their bitterness. The children of these parents never hear their teacher alluded to except it be in language the most derogatory and abusive, and they enter the school-room not only without a single prepossession in its favor, but with heads full of distorted views and ill-conceived prejudices. There are other parents who are perfectly willing to throw all responsibility upon the teacher, with little or no interest in the result. They are ready to furnish books and all the external wants of their children, and beyond this manifest no interest. In employing a teacher and sending their children to school, they feel that their entire obligation ceases, and if things go to destruction, it is no concern of theirs and they have no interest in preventing it.

They are, in some respects, as independent and regardless of results as was the Dutchman who, having given very willingly the sum of \$500 to aid the erection of a church, was subsequently called upon to contribute for the purpose of procuring a lightning-rod to secure the building from damage from the elements. Assuming a very decided manner he refused to contribute, saying, "I have help build de Lord a nice house, and now if he pe mind to dunder it down let him pe welcome to do it, and I will pe sure to put noting in de way of it."

So the parents alluded to seem to say by their actions, "We have sent our children to school, and if the teacher will not educate them and take care of them it is no concern of ours;" and, like the Dutchman, they seem perfectly willing to sacrifice

their investment rather than extend any aid which shall seem designed to assist in preserving the same from loss. Now the teacher must receive stock from parents such as I have named, and his duty is to deal with them and do for them as best he can, constantly thwarted by the opposing or injudicious influences of those who should be their earnest, cheerful, and constant coadjutors. Now under such circumstances, what must the teacher do? Will it help the matter to fret and storm because parents thus feel, and thus act, or to openly denounce them? Certainly not. He must labor patiently and hopefully, with a strong desire to train up a better generation of parents, and if possible do something for the improvement of those now on the stage of life. By continued kindness and fidelity he may win the affection and kindly feelings of pupils, even under the most unfavorable circumstances. Nay, he may do more than this. He may even overcome opposition and secure the sympathy and aid of some such parents as I have alluded to. But to this end he should seek their acquaintance, and gradually and judiciously enlist their interest and support. He must view them as they are, and endeavor, by the silken cords of kindness, to draw them to himself, and not as with a halter attempt to force or "choke" them into the work, for coöperation rendered against the will is but opposition still. To be truly successful the teacher must exert an influence outside of the school-room, and do much missionary work,—home missionary, I mean, of course. I am aware that many will protest against this on the ground that the duties of the school-room are sufficiently onerous without the addition of labor among the parents. This is too often the case, I know, but so important is this outside work that I am induced to think it will more than compensate for a little abbreviation of school time and school duties, by making labor more effective. How many hard feelings might be prevented, how many difficulties avoided or amicably adjusted, how much sympathy and coöperation gained, how much improvement in study and deportment secured, if parents and teachers should better understand each others' views, feelings, and desires. I would urge, then, that teachers devote more time and attention to the awakening of an interest on the part of parents, even though they may be obliged to curtail the labors of the school-room. If, however, a teacher cannot find time, or has not the inclination to call upon parents at their several homes, (and this in cities and many large towns is almost impossible,) he may do them and his school an essential service by occasionally inviting them to meet him in the school-room for the purpose of considering and discussing some of their mutual duties, and soliciting their coöperation in ways that may be designated. A plain and candid exposition and examination of these duties cannot fail of producing the

happiest results. How fitting, too, that parents and those who stand in the place of parents should meet and reason together in relation to those concerns in which they should feel a strong common interest, and for which they should strive with earnest and united efforts!

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For the Massachusetts Teacher.

### THE PUBLIC PRESS.

THE teacher should not only be alive in the school-room, but he should be a living man out of it. He should seek to make his influence felt beyond the walls that impale him during his six hours of required service. True, the mental labor, and, oftentimes, the impure air which he is compelled to breathe, produce a feeling of languor, upon relaxation, which seems to invite to repose, or at least to a cessation of severe thought and active effort. He needs rest, but not the rest of idleness; change of employment gives rest, both physical and mental, and if, instead of confining all his efforts to one channel, he would extend them to others less direct but not less effective, he would accomplish a greater amount of good, both for his own school and the community generally.

Does not the newspaper press furnish a valuable and almost unoccupied medium through which the teachers of Massachusetts may, if they will, exert a most powerful and lasting influence upon the mass of society, and upon all the departments of education in the State?

The newspaper finds its way into almost every family, and in many it is the only library, and furnishes the reading matter for the week. Parents read it; children read it; all read it. While there is an increasing general interest upon the subject of education and the condition of the schools, there are still many parents, perhaps a majority, who, to all practical purposes, are asleep. These need to be awakened, or, rather, made alive to their duties and parental obligations. Who shall do it? How shall it be done? When shall it be done? They do not put themselves in the way to hear lectures and discussions, and do not hear them, even if they come in their way; they do not read educational reports and essays, or gather light in any way respecting the pressing wants of their children and the schools.

Let the several teachers in a town take into account the more prominent evils that hinder their success, and concert a plan for coöperative and simultaneous action. Each one may prepare an article for a particular paper, all to appear about the same

time, so as to make the matter as general as possible, or, if there be but one paper generally taken, they may write successively till the topic has been sufficiently discussed, and there is a prospect of reform. Let this be judiciously followed up week after week; even though the results be not immediate and tangible, good will crown the end, and the teacher will feel, in time, that he has a better school, — better scholars, better parents, and, not improbably, that he is himself a better teacher; for the very efforts that he makes to arouse others, will not be wholly lost upon himself.

Is *irregular attendance* an evil in the place? This may furnish topics for several distinct communications. One may show its effects upon the habits and general character in after life, how much time will be lost, how many engagements broken, how much confusion, and how many failures will result in all the business transactions of life; another may exhibit the loss to the pupil who is thus irregular, his loss of lessons, and, what is worse, his loss of interest, his depreciation in the estimation of his class, and in his own self-respect, till, forced to take a lower grade, or as a last alternative, to avoid the unfavorable comparisons that he is obliged to draw between himself and his more punctual class mates, he leaves the school ignorant and discouraged; a third may discuss the evil effects upon the constant members of the school; classes are delayed to wait for those to come up who were absent yesterday, lessons must be gone over again to accommodate them, the ambitious falter, the faithful relax, and the tone of the class commences the descending scale; he may easily show how the best class may be paralyzed by the weight of a few such members; a fourth may review the subject in its pecuniary, a fifth in its moral bearings; and a sixth may take a general summary of the whole matter, and make the closing appeal.

Thus parents may be led to see that the occasional detention of their children from school is a matter of no small moment; they may see the evil in all its bearings, and will, in most cases, be willing, and even anxious, to join hands with the teacher for the accomplishment of the desired object.

Are parents remiss in the duty of visiting the school, or are there errors that lie beyond the power of the teacher to correct? A similar course, if pursued in the right spirit, will ameliorate, if it does not entirely remove the grievance. Not that this is the only means which the teacher should use, but it is *one* and an *important one*.

Teachers should see to it that the different papers are furnished with accounts of the lectures and discussions had at their associations, thereby extending their light and inducing others to attend them.

It will avail but little to pass or revise school laws, unless the

mass of the people appreciate them, and are interested in their execution.

The family newspaper is the proper medium through which to discuss their merits, and to explain their provisions.

Our school system, excellent as it is in its provisions, and much as it is eulogized, does not accomplish a tithe of what it might, could parents but realize, to the full extent, the blessings it is capable of conferring.

Who shall give the needed light? Who shall make the appeal? Who shall carry forward to its fullest realization what our forefathers so wisely anticipated in the formation of our Common School System? The Teacher. For the accomplishment of this object, there is no one instrumentality more accessible or more potent than the Public Press.

*Rockport, 1st July, 1851.*

C. H.

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### SUSTAIN YOUR PROFESSION.

THERE is a pride of profession which prompts men to make sacrifices and endure heavy burdens for giving character and consideration to it. Men generally look upon their employment with respect, and desire that it should be regarded with favor in the community. The clergyman places a high estimate upon the dignity of his calling, and enforces his claims upon society for professional regard with becoming energy and skill; the physician boasts of the extent and depth of medical science, the high rank it has attained among the employments of men, and pleads usefulness and benevolence in behalf of his profession; the jurist, with equal assiduity, endeavors to win golden opinions for the learning and astuteness which characterize the bar, and places his profession equally high in the scale of human employments; all unite in appropriate efforts to elevate their profession in the eyes of the community, except those engaged in the pursuit which, of all occupations, is in itself the most useful and honorable. The teacher has not cultivated this professional pride, nor made efforts to give consideration and respect to his calling. A large proportion of those now in the field, appear to care but little for the honor and dignity of the profession; they enter upon the discharge of their duties, devoting but little time to professional study, to associations for improvement and elevation, and feel but little interest in giving rank and consideration to their calling. The consequences are, that the three professions are styled "the learned," while that that makes them so, is itself less esteemed, and its members without their just and merited meed of respect. There are a few in the large army of teachers, who act as if they wished to see the teacher's

profession properly respected by society ; yet there are too many who appear to be wholly destitute of interest in efforts to give it rank and consideration.

It is true that "fidelity to trust and ability to discharge its duties, must give worth to individual character — that men must make the profession what it should be by individual merit, yet it is equally true that, without united effort to make the profession worthy the sympathies and respect of all classes of society, it will do but little for those who select it as the pursuit of life. Unless teachers unite, and labor diligently in efforts to establish professional land-marks, rules by which this distinct calling shall be governed, and assert their claims to be respected for magnifying and honoring their office, public opinion will never rank it above the common drudgery of life. Those persons who cannot afford the expense of attending Educational Conventions under the control and management of teachers, who make no sacrifices to keep up with the swift-moving spirit of the age, who are willing to be "examined every year to teach school" without the hope of ever being elevated so high as to secure a perpetual license, much less to participate in the deliberations and transactions of scholastic business, cannot be regarded as anything better than professional parasites — the mere hangers-on, who aim at nothing nobler than to secure employment at any price that may be offered by avaricious employers — men who are content to hang upon the reputation and fame acquired by the few who spare no pains to give respect to the business of teaching by improving themselves and correcting public sentiments, and who hang upon them with as much firmness as the ivy clings to the oak. But is this right? shall the *few* do the work for the benefit of the *many*? If all will come up to the mark, the burden will be light; certainly the labor should be distributed equally among all who are to derive benefits from its performance.

Will not the teachers of this State come up nobly like ingenuous men and women, to the associated enterprise of establishing for themselves those means of protection and support which will relieve them from the necessity of begging employment? People should seek the teacher, not the teacher seek for a situation which will afford the means of support. When society will distinguish between the competent professional teacher and the mere charlatan, who "keeps school" because he can do nothing else, the deserving will soon be esteemed, and their services sought and promptly and properly remunerated. Now, who but competent teachers are interested in the work of drawing these distinguishing lines? If this work is to be done by those who are qualified for their profession, and who love it because of

its means of doing, certainly no high-minded teacher will stand back, and remain a mere idle spectator of scenes which should gladden his heart. S.

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### GENTLENESS.

MANY teachers and many parents speak and act as though loud tones, stern looks, and rough movements were essential to secure obedience and correct discipline in the young. But nothing can be more erroneous. A noisy, boisterous parent will cause his children to be noisy and boisterous, and a loud-toned and rough teacher will be sure to have a noisy and disorderly school. The teacher and parent who would secure implicit obedience and wholesome discipline must be firm and decided, but yet kind and gentle. How much do the cheerful and kindly tones, and the friendly greetings and aids of a father and mother tend to make home pleasant, quiet and happy! So, too, how much may an instructor do to make the school-room attractive and orderly by wearing a cheerful countenance, by using gentle tones, and by manifesting kindly feelings and sympathies: and how easily, under such circumstances, will quiet submission be secured. Nothing is more true than that angry words, expressions and acts beget the like, while gentle tones and kind words and acts secure a most desirable control and influence. The instructor is often sorely tried and his patience wellnigh exhausted, but it will do no good for him to storm and fret, for every angry word and every unkind look on his part will only tend to make a bad matter worse. "A soft answer turneth away wrath," and gentleness of manner and expression will have a most happy influence. The following case is quite illustrative of this position: —

A merchant in London had a dispute with a Quaker respecting the settlement of an account. The merchant was determined to bring the question into court, a proceeding which the Quaker earnestly deprecated, using every argument in his power to convince the merchant of his error: but the latter was inflexible. Desirous to make the last effort, the Quaker called at his house one morning, and inquired of the servant if his master was at home. The merchant hearing the inquiry, and knowing the voice, called aloud from the top of the stairs.

"Tell that rascal that I am not at home."

The Quaker, looking up towards him, calmly said, "Well, friend, God put thee in a better mind."

The merchant, struck afterwards with the meekness of the reply, and having more deliberately investigated the matter, became convinced that the Quaker was right, and he in the

wrong. He requested to see him, and after acknowledging his error, he said, "I have one question to ask you — How were you able with such patience, on various occasions, to bear my abuse?"

"Friend," replied the Quaker, "I will tell thee. I was naturally as hot and as violent as thou art. I knew that to indulge this temper was sinful: and I found that it was imprudent. I observed that men in a passion always speak aloud; and I thought if I could control my voice, I should repress my passion. I have, therefore, made it a rule never to suffer my voice to rise above a certain key; and by a careful observance of this rule, I have, with the blessing of God, entirely mastered my natural temper."

The Quaker reasoned philosophically, and the merchant, as every one else may do, benefited by his example.

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### TEACHING AND ERRORS IN TEACHING.

[From a valuable work entitled, "American Education, by E. D. Mansfield, recently published by A. S. Barnes & Co., we make the following extracts. The work itself is a valuable one, and should be in every teacher's library.]

AMONG the ancient heathen nations, the Persians, in the time of Cyrus, considered the *virtues*, especially justice and gratitude, as the main object of education; among the Athenians, *accomplishments in arts, sciences, and letters*, were the end; and among the Spartans, *obedience* was the sole principle of instruction, because that would preserve the ascendancy of the laws. Yet neither of these answered their designs. Persia acquired some of the milder virtues, but failed in strength and hardihood; Athens found that neither art nor science would avail against depravity of morals; and Sparta found that it was not enough to secure obedience to laws without considering their nature and effect; Persia fell a victim to luxury, Athens to licentiousness, and Sparta to tyranny. Such are the lessons of antiquity, and its splendid wreck remains an example to warn us against the dangers of *partial* systems.

But under the new light which the Christian system has thrown over the power and destiny of the soul, a different view has been taken of the end and means of education. We consider the object of education now as twofold: — one to improve and strengthen the mind itself, the other to endow it with whatever is valuable or auxiliary in the duties of life. The second relates chiefly to topics of education, and may in this place be passed by. The first, however, requires an adaptation of means to the peculiar condition of a thinking and spiritual being.

For this purpose the teacher must first place himself upon terms of good-will with his pupil. One comes to receive, the other to give instruction. There is, therefore, a community of pursuits and of interests. Their minds should therefore *come together*, without which, I apprehend, little instruction is ever conveyed: it will be but the rolling stone of Sisyphus. Now to effect this mutuality of mind, the teacher must from the first show himself capable of instructing, and that it is *his* happiness and his *pupil's* gain. Then he will have the powerful aid of that sympathy which is the strongest bond of union in the human heart: he can effect that with kindness which no force can do; then he will sharpen the dull and strengthen the weak; then will the rugged steep of science be clothed with verdure, and the school-house ever after looked back upon as a sunny spot in the pathway of life. The quality we speak of is a *tact* in the teacher; but one which he must come by from nature or from art. Every good and successful teacher has it. Some acquire the confidence of their pupils, in spite of austere qualities, by their open, hearty, up-and-down *enthusiasm* for the subject of their teaching; others by the milder virtues of the heart, attracting by the cords of love; others, again, by an art which readily adapts itself to the well-understood movements of mind. But all who would succeed must have it. As well might we expect to warm ourselves by light reflected from the impassive ice, as to gather knowledge from that cold indifference, from which the eager inquiries and aspiring zeal of youth pass unregarded. It may exhibit in its own medium the prismatic colors, but sends forth no genial beam of heat.

The next step in process of teaching, is to inquire how a subject is to be taught. What functions of mind are we to call into activity? What principles are we to use? We cannot so well answer this question as by referring to some notable errors in education; errors which have prevailed in time past, and still prevail; which have governed whole nations; which have influenced the affairs of all mankind, and whose contrasted results are valuable to us.

#### THE FIRST ERROR OF TEACHING.

The first of these errors is teaching men to imitate, or repeat, rather than to think. We need to take but a very cursory glance at the great theatre of human life, to know how deep a root this radical error has struck into the foundation of education. Look abroad among men, and ask yourselves how many of the moving multitude inquire into the springs of action; how many seek to know the causes and consequences of those scenes in which they themselves are actors; or, to descend to details, how many attempt to understand the true principles of

the business in which they are engaged ; how many can correct a blunder arising merely from the application of a principle. Analyze this boasted liberty of ours ; look again upon republican society in this freest land upon earth ; separate the living agents from the mere automata in this game of life, and tell me how many of the latter — how many of the former ! And if you are not pleased with the result, tell me whether this is a decree of nature, or a fault of education ; whether you believe if men were taught to be independent thinkers, and that while they revered all that was good, or glorious, or valuable in the works of their ancestors, that they too had an indwelling spirit whose high prerogative it was to extend the conquests of mind, they would cease to inquire and remain dull floats upon this ocean of beings !

But if you would know what the effects of thinking are, compare Athens with China. Here are three hundred millions of people — more than one third of the human race — whose history goes far back into remote antiquity, and who commenced with no small share of the arts and sciences, but who have added not a single particle to knowledge, nor taken one step in improvement ; whose only policy is to prevent innovation, and whose only power is to perpetuate succession. Here is another people, whose population does not exceed one tenth that of Ohio, whose place can scarcely be found on the map, who commenced barbarians, yet who have given to the world new sciences and new arts, and whose mighty men infused into language

“ Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn ; ”

who reconquered their conquerors by the spirit of eloquence, and whose renown has filled the earth.

What makes this mighty difference ? The one learned to repeat, the other to think.

#### THE SECOND ERROR OF TEACHING.

Another error which has prevailed in some places and times is, that the pupil can acquire nothing except by observation or experiment. It assumes that the mind can deduce nothing from given premises, but is a manipulator in the great school of art, where every thing must be reduced to the senses ; and because illustration is a very good thing, therefore you cannot have too much of it ; and because experiment is a good way for philosophers to make discoveries, therefore it is the best way for children to learn them. Something like this was the theory of J. J. Rosseau, who proposed that a boy should be taken at one season of the year on a hill-top and shown the sun in a certain position, and at another in another — and thus of other things ; but how long it will take a boy to go through all the experi-

ments of all the philosophers, he has not informed us. Others, however, have improved upon this example, and introduced the world in miniature into the school-room. Cubes, cones, and pyramids, sun, moon, stars, and comets, dance attendance upon their levee; and when these fail, the art of engraving is exhausted to exhibit upon the pages of the school-book things human and inhuman from the wonders of the deep to "gorgons and chimeras dire." Now, doubtless, good maps, globes, or even a well-executed picture of some great event, and still more a social walk with some instructive friend, who could say, with David, that "day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge," may be made useful aids of a good teacher; for such a one cannot be supposed not to know and adapt to his purpose the strong attractions of sense for the young; but on the other hand, neither will he be expected to teach abstract truth by models or experiments.

The fallacy of this error consists in overlooking the real advantage which science confers upon the teacher—that of generalization. It is the condensation of knowledge which is the great facility in the art of teaching, afforded by constant improvements. How else could education keep up at all with the accumulation of knowledge? It takes a generation for philosophy to discover and demonstrate a principle which, in after times, the pupil learns in a single hour.

#### THE THIRD ERROR OF TEACHING.

The third error, and in a great measure that of our times, is to interpose a patent machinery between the teacher and his pupil; a labor-saving machine by which we shall print off minds just as we print off calicoes: flimsy, parti-colored, cheap enough they are. We get up a long array of text-books, which are so good we hardly know how to choose among them; and which facilitate the art of teaching so much, there is nothing left for the teacher to do, except as the ancients did with the oracles of Delphos,—to ask questions and receive answers. And then we have discovered another great facility in teaching: it is rather laborious to lead the pupil up the hill of knowledge, and as the teacher and he have to meet somewhere, why the teacher must walk down; and, as the child cannot talk learnedly, why the teacher must talk simply. In this manner the grand desideratum in teaching, as in many other arts, that of getting along by doing nothing, is at last discovered. The pupil and the teacher are both contented. The one has found an *easy-chair*, and the other has no hill to *climb*.

## A DEFICIENCY OF MORAL INSTRUCTION.

IN this busy, excitable, and money-seeking age of ours there is much need of strong and sound moral instruction, — a loud call for the cultivation of those nobler traits of the heart, which tend to true exaltation of character, and which alone can render man a fit and worthy image of his Maker: — and yet, we fear that teachers and parents come far short of their whole duty in relation to this matter. Unless the young are trained to respect and exercise virtue, temperance, truth, honesty, brotherly kindness, charity, and all those graces that tend to the true elevation and adornment of life, it were better that they remain in ignorance. But let teachers and parents labor unitedly and earnestly to inculcate in the minds of the young a strong regard for whatever is “lovely and of good report,” — to instil into them a proper feeling of their dependence *upon* and accountability *to* a higher power, — to create within them a true feeling for the rights and welfare of others, by impressing upon them, in every suitable way, and on every suitable occasion, the beauties and value of the golden rule, which teaches us “to do unto others as we would have others do unto us;” — we say, let parents and teachers *earnestly* labor for these things, and we shall see the young walking betimes in wisdom’s ways, and diffusing a happy and blessed influence around them. Exposed, as the young are, to temptations and the influences of bad example, they have occasion for all the goodly influences that can be brought to bear by all who may feel interested in their well-being.

May we not, then, urge upon the consideration of teachers the importance of right and seasonable moral training? To you the young look for example, for advice, for encouragement. *Of* you and *from* you they seek for guidance and support, and shall they seek in vain, or worse than in vain? Will you, for bread, give them a stone? for an egg, a scorpion? or for a fish, a serpent? If not, then give them at all times the benefit of a good example and wise instruction. Above all, let me beseech you to protect them from contamination and ruin through the pernicious influences of the miserable and debasing trash which is so freely circulated at the present day, in the shape of cheap pamphlets, and which are exposed for sale in every village of our land. Teach them to shun these as they would the venomous serpent or the deadly upas. Far better would it be that the young never learn the letters of the alphabet, than that they learn to read that they may spend their precious time in the perusal of the wretched trash to which we have alluded.

May we as teachers do what we can to lead the young to feel that their highest usefulness and happiness cannot be pro-

moted in the too eager pursuit of the riches of this world, nor in the indulgence of those baser and more grovelling passions which tend to approximate man to the brute, — but in being good, and in doing good, they will find their true honor and true happiness.

### PROFANITY.

It can hardly be presumed that any teacher will be so regardless of his own reputation, and so reckless of the influence of his example upon the young, as to be guilty of using profane language. If, however, there are any such in the teacher's profession, we would earnestly commend him to consider the following excellent remarks from a discourse preached by the Rev. Mr. Butler to his society in Danvers. In many places no individual who uses profane language is allowed to teach, and we hope the time will soon come when profanity will be regarded as great an impropriety and sin in the teacher as it now is in the clergyman.

To every one who regards his reputation I may say, "Swear not at all," for swearing will *injure* your reputation.

It is true, indeed, that profaneness is less disreputable than it would be were it more manifestly hurtful to your fellow men; and yet, careless as men are of whatever trenches not on their own obvious interests, profaneness is disreputable.

It is reputable to be *polite*; but all books on politeness, both before and since Lord Chesterfield, reprobate profaneness. The table of *Washington* was a standard of manners, and when an officer dropped an oath there, *Washington* paused and said, "I *thought* we were all gentlemen," — a rebuke that was not soon called for again. It is reputable to reverence the *law* of the *land*, but no profane person has the law on his side. All statutes have pains and penalties for his chastisement. It is reputable to show a decent respect to the feelings of the religious *world*, — but profaneness is an *abomination* to every religious man, be his denomination what it may.

It is reputable to shun what public *opinion* condemns — but it condemns profaneness. This is evident, since the adversaries of Gen. Taylor, when he was a candidate for the presidency, labored to prove him a swearer, sensible that they could thus darken his political prospects. This was also manifest at a public dinner in this commonwealth, when, on an oath being uttered by a wanton youth, it was moved that there be no swearing done at that table, except by the oldest clergyman present. The motion prevailed, no one dissenting.

It is reputable that a man's *word* be a sufficient voucher for

his assertions, — but whoever swears seems to say that in his *own* opinion his word is not above suspicion. It is reputable for a man to be able to speak his mind, but whoever interlards his speech with oaths seems to confess that *he cannot* endow his purposes with words to make them known.

It is reputable for a man to shun *himself* what he blames in others. He who would pluck a mote out of another's eye must have no beam in his own. But many who swear themselves denounce their own habit when they see it in others, or in such as teach it to their children, — or even in the *parrot* that echoes unseasonably their maledictions.

The swearer soils his good name because he does that which he is ashamed to have come abroad, and yet which he fails to keep secret. Whoever indulges in profaneness will let fall impious expressions in company where he will be mortified and driven to ask pardon. This may be his experience after long and sincere endeavors to reform, as it seems to have been the experience of the apostle Peter, holden by the cords of a long forsaken sin, so that when angry, he began to curse and to swear. He who thinks to swear in *secret* hideth the wind and the ointment of his right hand, which bewrayeth itself. Tell-tales or children will repeat his impieties in the ears by which he would have them heard last and least. Good reason, then, is there to say, — "Curse not in thy bed-chamber, for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter."

Profaneness, then, inasmuch as it tramples on the laws of etiquette and of the land, betokens ignorance or insincerity, outrages public opinion and religious sentiment, and is incapable of concealment, — must be shunned by every man who would secure an unsullied reputation.

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For the Massachusetts Teacher.

MR. EDITOR: — The lesson which the following article, recently published in the *Christian Register*, contains, is worthy of all imitation. Habits of neatness, order and industry should be constantly inculcated in the school-room; not merely by theoretical regulations, but by practical example in the teacher's own life. From a combination of these two influences is society to be moulded; for not only "as is the teacher, so is the school;" but, as is the school, so is the society from which the pupils come.

And it is not to what of *literary* acquisition the school is instrumental in furnishing, that the community is principally indebted for its character, its happiness, or its usefulness to our race; but rather to collateral instructions, which aid in finish-

ing the man as a *moral* and *social* being. And yet, how almost universally is this matter overlooked in the estimate made of the public schools! When will school committees learn to give that prominence to this department of common education, which its importance demands?

G. F. T.

### THE DOOR SCRAPER,

#### OR THE INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL ON HOME.

It is to be regretted that our school committees pay so little regard to manners, in the selection of teachers, and if their morals are good, and their acquaintance with the common branches of study respectable, employ them without much regard to the question whether they are courteous, refined and gentlemanly in their address and behavior. Now, what the teacher is, in this respect, the pupils will generally be, and, unless they see better patterns at home, the standard of the teachers will be theirs also. If they see the teacher addicted to any habit, they will think it manly to imitate him: if he spits upon the floor, the child will do the same. If his boots are seldom cleaned, the child will be more likely to boast that he brings more mud into the school than the master does, and that his shoes are clean and the master's dirty.

We were led into this train of remarks, by an incident which took place in a village of Massachusetts where the teacher was accustomed to regard his personal appearance, and to require some attention to theirs from his pupils. When he took charge of the school, he noticed that the pupils, in muddy weather, were accustomed to enter the school-room and stamp the mud upon the floor, or carry it to their seats and soil the floor for a large space around them. No sweeping could clean such a floor, and, of course, none had been attempted more than once a week. Determined to make an attempt at reform, the teacher obtained a piece of iron hoop, and nailing one end to the door, he fastened the other to a walnut stake, that he drove into the ground. Every child was required to scrape his shoes before he entered the room, and the consequence was that the true floor became visible through the crust that covered it. The next step was to get a rug for the entry, and a neat farmer's wife very readily gave him an old rug that she could spare. It did not take him long to induce the habit of scraping and wiping the shoes, and a lad or miss who did not do this, was soon noticed by the rest, and made to feel that he or she had not done all that was required. Soon after the rug was introduced, the teacher ventured to have the whole floor of the school-room washed, — washed, not scoured, — for he had to do it himself one Saturday afternoon, and washing was all he was

competent to do. When the scholars came on Monday morning, it was evident they were taken by surprise. They had never seen the like before ; the very knots in the floor were visible, and they gave several extra rubs and scrapes before they ventured to set foot on the beauties so strangely exposed. This is always the case ; and we have known a man who exercised the muscles of his under jaw by chewing tobacco, and who would have spirted the saliva without compunction upon the floor of a school-room, running round a carpeted room like a crazy man, to find a place of deposit for this filth. So true is it that neatness begets neatness, and a nice school-room is better treated by the unneat than a neglected one. The teacher thus introduced one thing after another, taking care not to go too fast, and, although he had no penalty for a breach of the rules of neatness, he introduced a public sentiment which restrained the pupils more effectually than the rod ; and, as his own example was always made to second his rules, the children found no hardship or injustice in them.

Amongst the scholars was one little fellow about eight years old, named Freddy Gerrish, whose parents were poor, and cared but little for appearances, if the children had bread enough to eat from day to day. Freddy was the oldest of five children, and when not at school he was generally minding his brothers and sisters, as the Irish term what we call tending or taking care of them. One day, on his way home from school, he found an iron hoop, and before night he had a scraper at the only door of the house. It so happened that, when his father came home, his boots were covered with bog mud, and almost for the first time in his life, he looked round for something to clean them. The scraper that Freddy had placed there was just the thing, and the little fellow was praised for his ingenuity. Soon after a sheep was killed by a dog in a field near Mr. Gerrish's house, and no one caring for it, Freddy offered to bury it, if he might have the skin, which had but little wool on it. He borrowed a jackknife of a larger boy, and soon stripped off the skin from the body, and then cutting as large a square out of it as he could, he went home and proposed to his mother to nail it down in the entry. This was done to please Freddy, and the baby was allowed to sit on it until father came home.

The effect of Freddy's attempt to reform was soon felt, and his mother was no longer heard to say, as she often had done, "It is of no use to sweep !" "Wife," said Mr. Gerrish one evening, "your floor is whiter than the wall ; I must get some lime and whitewash a little, for Freddy's scraper seems to have a tail to it." The room was shining white before another day was passed, and as the cooking utensils began to look ill, standing around the stove, Mr. Gerrish, who was a good farmer,

changed work with a carpenter, and had a set of shelves made, with a cupboard under them. One day after she had scoured the floor, Mrs. Gerrish said to herself, "I wonder whether I cannot paint this floor well enough for poor people; for though a white floor looks well, it is easier to clean a painted one." Freddy was despatched to the coach-maker's to ask what some suitable paint would cost. "How big is your room?" said the man, who had often noticed that Freddy was never among the boys that were doing mischief. "Four times as long as I can reach one way, and five times the other," said Freddy. The man applied the rule to Freddy's arms, and said, "It will cost you half a dollar." "Who is to do the painting?" said the man. "Mother, sir, is going to try, because she can't afford to pay for the paint and painting too, and she wants to do it before father come home." "You love her, don't you?" said the coach-maker. "I guess I do," said Freddy, "and she loves me too, because I made a scraper at the door, like master Hall's at the school. She says if it had not been for the scraper, she never would have thought of the paint, and we are going to stay in the bed-room or out o'doors till the paint is dry."

"I see through it," said the man. "Go home and tell your mother I will come presently and paint the floor for nothing." The boy was starting off, when the coach-maker recollected that half the charm was to consist in the wife's doing the work, and surprising her husband with a floor painted with her own hand, and he called the boy back and asked him if his mother had any money. "A little," said he; "she bought some yarn and knit three pair of stockings while the baby was asleep, and sold them." "Here is the paint," said the man, "I give it to you, my little fellow, because you love your mother." The little fellow's eyes glared with astonishment at the idea of possessing so much paint, and of being paid for so easy a task as loving his mother, and as the big tears began to roll down his cheeks, he said, "Mother will be able to buy the Bible now." "What Bible?" said the coach-maker, who had become interested in the boy. "The Bible for me to read every night and morning, as the master does." "I have some Bibles to give away," said the man, "and if you will not spill the paint, you may take one under your arm." "I declare," said Freddy, "I don't know what mother will say to all this. How will she pay you, sir?" "Would you like to do a little work for me, my little fellow?" "I guess I should," said Freddy, "if I was big enough I'd work for you ever so long." I want just such a scraper at my door, as you made your father, and if you will make me one, I will take it in full pay for the paint and the Bible." "I can't make one good enough for you," said Freddy bashfully. "That is my look-out," said the man, "so

carry home the paint, and come when you can and make the scraper." Freddy went home, and when his mother saw him with a book under one arm and both hands holding on the paint pot, she exclaimed, "Why, Freddy, what have you done? I only told you to ask the price of the paint." "I know it," said Freddy, "but the man made a trade with me, and he is to give me all these, if I will make him a scraper for his door, and I am going to do it."

To make a long story short, the scraper at the school door was the making of Mr. Gerrish and his family. The entire change of habits introduced into their humble dwelling not only led to neatness and order, but to thrift and comfort. The scraper was made for the coach-maker, who continued to do a hundred other friendly acts for the family. Freddy obtained an excellent education, and is an intelligent and wealthy farmer, and when he built his new house, he carefully placed the old scraper by the side of the door, as if it were a talisman. Master Hall taught from district to district, and being of a slender constitution, his health early failed, and he was quietly laid in the churchyard of a country town, unconscious that the seed he had sown had ever produced any fruit like that we have described. Freddy could never discover his resting place, but he erected a cenotaph to his memory near the school-house, which he also rebuilt, and once a year he collects the children of the village around it, and tells them the story of the scraper at the old school door.

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### SCHOOL SUPERVISION.

WITHIN a year or two, much has been said and written in reference to the subject of school supervision, and the feeling is rapidly gaining ground that a better and more efficient mode may be adopted than that now in practice. As a general thing the schools of Massachusetts do not receive that watchful and auxiliary supervision which their highest usefulness would seem to demand. This, from the very nature of the case, must be so. The whole business is usually entrusted to men whose time and attention are much engrossed in other concerns. They may be, and usually are, among the best men in the community; but they are also men who have many professional cares or business engagements, and, consequently, they cannot devote very much time or thought to the interests of the schools. We contend that in order that any important department be well looked after and cared for, it should receive direct and primary attention; and we contend, also, that our schools are of sufficient importance to receive the best and first attention of good men as supervisors. Hence we believe that the true method is to

entrust the main duties of school superintendence, in large towns and cities, to one man, who shall consider it *the* business to which his best thoughts and energies are to be given. A man thus situated would feel that he had something to do, and he would be likely to do *something*. He would do much to encourage and stimulate the teachers and pupils, much to arouse parents, much to awaken a general and wholesome interest in the whole subject of school education, much to secure a wise and economical expenditure of the means appropriated to educational purposes. We never felt more confident of the good results of this mode of supervision than we did in a recent visit to the town of Gloucester, in Essex County. For nearly two years the schools in this place have been under the supervisory control of Thomas Baker, Esq., (with a counseling board of committee,) and we feel assured that during this period as much has been done, and *well* done, as in any town of the Commonwealth. School-houses have been erected and improved, and the whole cause has received an impulse which will be felt for many years. In no place have we seen more comely and convenient school-houses, and we are sure that in no place has money been more judiciously expended or more freely granted than here. It affords a strong proof that the people are ready and willing to pay liberally when their attention is rightly awakened, and when they see that the means appropriated are economically and wisely used. Mr. Baker has worked heartily, and accomplished much, *very much* good for the schools and for the town. It was our purpose to allude to his specific duties and to his general operations, but want of time and space forbids. We will only add now, that if any have doubts as to the advantage of the mode we have alluded to over the mode in general use, we would refer them to the town of Gloucester, with its present excellent mode and excellent superintendent.

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#### PLYMOUTH COUNTY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

A SEMIANNUAL meeting of this Association was held at North Bridgewater on the 13th and 14th of June, 1851.

Misses Mary E. Nash and Eliza J. Parish, and Messrs. Dana P. Colburn and Lewis E. Noyes, were appointed a Committee on Criticism.

Mr. Tillinghast proposed for discussion "the best method of conducting recitations," and after his motion for adopting the proposition had been carried, he proceeded to begin the discussion. The first great duty of the teacher in regard to recitations, is a thorough preparation upon every lesson to be recited. Many complain of a want of time for such preparation; their duties are so onerous and multifarious, that careful preparation,

is almost out of the question with them. He did not understand such persons. Mr. Pierce, formerly principal of W. Newton Normal School, in addition to all the duties required of him as principal of the school, including general supervision of the school, correspondence with strangers, &c., always found time to examine carefully every lesson before hearing it recited.

Mr. Spear thought that a wrong notion prevails with reference to what constitutes a thorough understanding of the subject of a lesson. It seems to be thought that if a scholar can repeat the words of the text, he understands the subject. Nothing can be more false. As a result of the teaching to which this opinion gives rise, we see the pupils in our district schools, beginning the subjects of geography and grammar in precisely the same place at the commencement of many successive terms. During the winter school they will pass over a certain amount of ground, but before the next winter, the language which they have committed to memory has vanished from their minds, and they know as little of the subject as they did before beginning to study it. With arithmetic, it is not so to the same extent, because in this science the pupil is *obliged* to think somewhat in order to perform the examples.

Rev. Mr. Norton thought that much evil results from a want of independence from text-books on the part of the teacher. Recitations are not so animating when conducted by a text-book, as they would be if the teacher, by preparation, made himself so thoroughly acquainted with the subject as not to need one. Neither can the questions asked by the teacher be varied as much as they should be. He illustrated his remarks by allusion to a college examination which he once visited, in which the professor was prevented from noticing several cases of cheating that occurred, by having his eye confined to his book.

Rev. Mr. Bradford gave some of the results of his experience in teaching the French language. He thought the proper course to pursue in teaching reading is to drill a long time on a few lines.

Mr. Colburn followed with some remarks upon the false idea that because an individual understands a certain subject, he is qualified to teach it.

Dr. Cutter thought that time might be well employed in explaining the subject beforehand, and also the manner of studying the lesson.

Rev. Mr. Aldritch thought that difficulties would arise under the system of drilling recommended by Mr. Bradford, from the fact that very frequently teachers are not good readers. He spoke of the necessity of perfect self-control in the teacher. Enthusiasm is also necessary to the teacher; he must feel a strong interest in his school.

Mr. Startevant alluded to some of the difficulties of thorough drilling. Parents are often dissatisfied with it. But he thought that generally such difficulties were temporary.

Rev. Mr. Brigham mentioned some of the incidents of his college life. He spoke of Rev. Dr. Nott as one who was always independent of his text-book. We attempt to accomplish too many things in our schools. Teachers should be required to teach but few subjects at a time.

The Committee on Criticism reported through its chairman, Mr. Colburn. Quite an animated discussion arose upon the report, which continued until 3 o'clock. At this time, upon the arrival of his Excellency, Gov. Boutwell, Rev. Dr. Sears, and Hon. Speaker Banks, the large and very interesting juvenile singing school of Mr. Gurney favored the Association with a voluntary song. The performance of this company of "little folks" at this time, and at various other times in the course of the meeting, increased greatly the interest of the occasion.

At 3 P. M. the President introduced Gov. Boutwell to the audience as the lecturer of the day. His Excellency began by saying that the value of education depends upon the objects which, as a community, we have in view. One great object in Massachusetts is to promote the happiness of the whole people. To us, therefore, education is highly valuable. A general system of educating the young can alone secure the happiness of the whole people. But there are obstacles in the way of a full accomplishment of this purpose. One of these is the constant immigration of foreigners. In reference to these and their children, we can pursue but one course with safety to our free institutions. They must be educated.

Our railroads have a tendency to make the diffusion of knowledge unequal. One hundred years ago, great men were to be found in the most remote and retired parts of the State; now, as soon as one springs up in any of the country towns, he is immediately drawn into the metropolis, or into some one of the larger places. There is an accumulation of mental power as well as of wealth at those places. By a thorough education of the whole people, we must as far as possible neutralize the bad effects of this.

Before the establishment of Normal Schools, we had two classes of teachers for our common schools: one class came from the colleges, and these, as a class, were incompetent, and failed, because teaching was not their business; they were devoted to other pursuits. Others grew up among the schools, and although these infused much energy into the schools, yet as a whole, they met with no success, for the want of thorough mental training. We have now established Normal Schools for the purpose of raising up a profession of teachers, and when the profession is formed we must support it with money; for after all, it

is very much a matter of money. Good abilities cannot be commanded without good salaries. It is said that we now pay liberally; that from one million to one million five hundred thousand dollars are annually expended for schools and school-houses in the State. But let us consider what would be the state of any property, if the masses of the people were not educated. It would evidently be insecure, entirely at the mercy of an illiterate, unprincipled mob. Now the property of the State amounts to six hundred millions of dollars, and the holders of it are interested in its security. Although the poor man derives incalculable advantage from education, and from living in an educated community, yet, comparatively, he is little benefited. The education of the whole people is peculiarly advantageous to the wealthy. Property holders then should be the warmest friends of popular education, and should be willing to pay a fair percentage for the security which is so valuable to them.

The economical effect of education was illustrated by reference to the history of Paisley for the last fifty years. About the beginning of the present century, this was one of the most flourishing towns in the whole world. Its inhabitants were intelligent, skilful, orderly, and well-disposed. Before that time, no children had been employed in the factories until a comparatively advanced age; but a species of weaving was now introduced in which very young children could be profitably employed. This was done, and from that time to the present, the social condition of Paisley has declined until its population have reached the lowest depths of vice and ignorance. Allusion was made to the early history of New Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay, and the deduction was drawn that the school system of those days had prepared the people for the American Revolution. This was not accomplished by a few individuals, but was the effect of action on the part of the whole people.

Hon. N. P. Banks, Jr. was then called out by the President, and addressed the assembly for some time with great effect. In legislation and in ordinary business, humanity is not spoken of as valuable until the time of manhood. But we must think of the future. Coming time cannot speak for itself alone; it must speak for the present also. The manhood of the future is the boyhood of to-day. If we should visit the institutions of our State for the reform of juvenile offenders, we should see many young children upon whom the decrepitude of age and the marks of crime are stamped. They seem to have come from their Creator thus deformed and disfigured; and yet human agency might have preserved their youth — might have enabled them to come upon the stage of life fair and well formed, and to pass away from it in the greenness and beauty of youth. Dr. Channing was cited as an example of a man who had died young, so far as moral and intellectual vigor was concerned. The

speaker concluded with warning teachers against separating themselves from the other members of the community. Nothing like castes can for a moment be tolerated in this country.

The evening exercises were opened with prayer by Rev. Mr. Couch, followed by a voluntary from the choir.

Rev. Dr. Sears was announced as the lecturer of the evening. After a few pleasant remarks in regard to the unexpectedness of the call for a lecture from him, he proceeded with a brilliant and stirring address, which warmed the souls of all present. There never was a time when the great mass of human beings presented a scene of such intense intellectual activity, as at present. History does not furnish any precedent of this kind. How shall this great mental power be controlled?

It is said that it may be done by employing several good influences, as that of the family, of the pulpit, and of a pure and refined literature. But the pulpit is not universal; it speaks only to a part of humanity. The press is not always pure and refined, and although its influences are very great, yet it is exceedingly doubtful whether it tends mostly to good or to evil. From these objections the schools are free. In their developed state, they are universal, embracing the whole of the population. When the character of the teacher is what it should be, their influence is very strong for good. No means can then be employed so universal and so decidedly good for the guidance of the human intellect, as the schools. And again, the teacher's power is immense.

We have an illustration of this in the effects produced by the Jesuits. With a little that was good in their system, they succeeded to an almost incredible degree in subjecting the human will to human authority. Let the teacher be as faithful and as industrious in his labors as they were, and his success will be as much greater than theirs, as his object, the subjecting of the human will to divine authority, is superior to the object the Jesuit had in view.

A very important question is, for what shall we educate the child? Some say, educate him to get a living. This answer contains some truth and some error. Others say, educate him for the time for which he is to live, and the society in which he is to move. Here is also some truth and some error. In addition to all this, you must have in your own mind a higher ideal character, to which the pupil is to be conformed so far as he can be. You must educate for society, but you must educate for its advancement.

It is sometimes said that children should be taught in school what they will need to know when they become men and women. This statement is too broad. The thing cannot be done; and the attempt to do it had produced a multiplicity of studies in the

schools. By this means teachers have sometimes been able to get up showy examinations, and to acquire a species of popularity; but it is all mere sounding brass of the most worthless kind. What then shall be taught? The elementary principles of knowledge; and let the application of them come afterwards. Those habits so essential to mental growth, as accuracy, care, certainty, in all kinds of work, must also be carefully inculcated. You must go to the foundation of things. The effect will not be apparent so soon, but the best of a good school cannot be seen for many years. It is like the seed sown in the earth; it must be out of sight a long time, and our impatient efforts to see and exhibit it before its time, destroy it.

The address was followed by fine music from the choir.

On Saturday the exercises were begun with prayer by Rev. Mr. Audem. Mr. Colburn was chosen a member *pro tempore* of the Executive Committee. Messrs. Tillinghast, Hunt and Spear were appointed a committee to prepare resolutions. Dr. Stone of Boston, according to an arrangement made with the Executive Committee, proceeded to exhibit some of the results of Phonographic and Phonotypic methods of instruction. This exhibition was exceedingly interesting and instructive.

From the close of the exhibition to the adjournment, the time was very profitably occupied in the discussion of the subject of Phonotopy, and the following resolution presented by Mr. Morton, of Plymouth:

*Resolved*, That it is the duty of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to establish an institution, of high literary character, for the education of persons of either sex, free of charge to such persons for tuition or room rent.

Messrs. Tillinghast, Spear and Hunt were appointed a committee to consider this resolution and to report at some subsequent meeting.

The President exhibited a specimen of India rubber globe, furnished from the office of the Secretary of the Board of Education.

After the report of the Committee on Criticism, in the afternoon, the President announced J. W. Hunt, Esq. as the lecturer of the day. He had selected for his subject, the defects of the Massachusetts school system. In some respects the system was more defective than in the days of our fathers. He showed that in our colonial days, a great many enactments were in force, whose tendency and result was to ensure ALL the children a more rigid HOME training, than at present, of body, mind and heart, as a firm basis for school education. The youth of those times were shielded from ignorance and vice by living legal restrictions. An enactment concerning tobacco, that foe to neatness and germ of dissipation, was, with others, instanced. Idleness, by our fathers, was treated as a crime. And that

from the falling into disuse of such excellent laws, the seeds of dissipation and immorality had sprung into a vigorous growth, thus paralyzing the influences of our school system. The greatest evil our schools labor under is the WANT of such effective measures, to give correct habits physically and mentally. Several old laws were cited to show that the expenditure for schools was then greater than it now is, in proportion to the number and ability of the inhabitants; and to show that the requirements in regard to high and grammar schools were very much more stringent than at present. A plan was recommended for completing the Normal system, by the establishment of a Normal College, in which teachers might be fitted for High schools, and instructed in the ancient languages. For the examination of teachers, a State board was recommended, composed of practical teachers, selected equally from each county, whose duty it should be, to examine the graduating classes from the Normal schools, with others that might apply, and whose certificate should be honored in ANY part of the State. Also County boards of practical teachers, with County jurisdiction. The members of both State and County boards to be chosen for three years, one-third retiring annually. The lecturer expressed himself opposed to the district system now in force in the greater part of the State, as a system fostering aristocracy and local jealousies. He would have schools, fewer, larger, better classified, and enjoying more equal privileges; and the Town Superintending Committees also chosen for three years, one-third retiring each year, that more STABILITY might be given to the teacher's vocation. By such improvements in our system could the teacher's profession be elevated to its appropriate position.

After the lecture, the time was spent in discussion. This was conducted by several gentlemen, including G. F. Thayer, Esq., who spoke encouragingly to the teachers present, urging them to do every thing they undertake well.

Several resolutions, returning the thanks of the Association for attentions received, were adopted.

The next meeting of the Association will be held at Kingston, on the Friday and Saturday next preceding Thanksgiving. Messrs. Sanford and Edwards, of Bridgewater, were announced as lecturers for the occasion. Hereafter, by a vote of the Association, the meetings are to be held regularly, the one on the second Friday and Saturday in June, and the other on the Friday and Saturday next preceding Thanksgiving.

Two prizes of \$10 each are offered for essays on the subjects given out at the last meeting.

The interest in the Association has been constantly on the increase. No less than 700 persons were present during some of the exercises of this meeting, and at no time was the number less than about 250.

RICHARD EDWARDS, *Secretary*.

## SEEK WISDOM.

"KNOWLEDGE is power," and he who will  
 Its potent spell may feel,  
 For Nature's thousand willing tongues,  
 Instructive truths reveal:  
 Seek but to know them, and the mind,  
 In their pursuit, will pleasure find.

Seek wisdom from the little child  
 That lives mid smiles and tears,  
 And from the aged man, whose form  
 Is bent and curved with years;  
 Scorn not the source from whence it springs,  
 'Tis worthy of the aid it brings.

The daisy on the verdant lawn,  
 The summer cloud on high,  
 The purling brook, the fragrant breeze,  
 And stars that gem the sky,  
 Are volumes all whose words divine,  
 Proclaim to man God's great design.

Let every moment as it flies  
 Be spent with zealous care  
 To gain instruction that shall make  
 The mind new lustre bear.  
 Around thy path 'twill shed a light  
 To cheer thy way through sorrow's night.

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### Resident Editors' Table.

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Resident Editors, { JOSHUA BATES, JR. | WILLIAM D. SWAN, } of Boston.  
                               { J. D. PHILBRICK, | GIDEON F. THAYER, }

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THE Examining Committee of the Boston schools for the year 1851, have made their annual visit, and completed the examination of all the schools. The examination of each school was conducted by the Rev. Mr. Winslow, Chairman of the Examining Committee. The Superintendent, Mr. Bishop, was present at the examination of each school. We are happy to hear from many teachers, the favorable impression Mr. Bishop has made in his visits to the different schools. Mr. Bishop came among us as a stranger, and he has so speedily commended himself to the good opinion of the Boston instructors, that we believe he will receive the cheerful and hearty coöperation of all teachers, in his efforts for the welfare and success of the Boston schools.

B., JR.

WE understand that W. D. Swan, Esq. has tendered his resignation to the School Board, as Principal of the Mayhew School. He leaves the profession to connect himself with one of the best established houses in the book trade.

Mr. Swan has been for a number of years a most successful teacher. In early life, he commenced his professional career in one of our interior towns, and soon by faithfulness and success in teaching rose to his present position, where, as the numerous reports of different school committees show, he has always sustained himself with distinguished ability. Mr. Swan has always manifested a deep and lively interest in the welfare of our public schools. At our State School Conventions and at our Institutes, he has always been regular in his attendance, his influence has been felt, and his opinions have been favorably received in all matters pertaining to the general interests of education. In the meridian of life and usefulness, he leaves the profession with the esteem of his brethren and the respect of the community. That success and happiness may attend him, and that his influence may still be given to sustain and improve our noble system of free schools, is the sincere wish of his numerous friends.

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J. B., JR.

WE learn that S. S. Green, Esq., for some years the successful and popular principal of the Phillips School, Boston, and late assistant to Dr. Sears, Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, has been appointed Superintendent of the Providence schools. We congratulate the citizens, school committee, and teachers of Providence in securing the services of one so well qualified for the situation, both by his practical and sound views of educational matters, and by his experience in teaching. His reputation as a scholar, his success as a teacher, his worth as a man, eminently qualify him for usefulness and distinction in the honorable office which he has been called to fill.

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J. B., JR.

*Sixth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Common Schools of Connecticut, 1851.*

THIS document contains about 175 pages, and consists of three departments. I. The general report of the Superintendent, Hon. Henry Barnard. II. Reports of proceedings of Institutes. III. Reports of the County Inspectors.

We regard this as one of the most valuable publications on the subject of common schools which we have seen. Its chief excellence consists in its eminently *practical* character. We have here no Utopian dreams, and no empty declamation, but a plain and intelligible statement of the evils and defects of the schools, with their proper remedies.

The principal topics discussed by Mr. Barnard in his Report proper, are the following:—Teachers' Institutes; State Normal School; School Attendance; Adaptation of our system of Common Schools to the peculiar circumstances of the population—(1) to Agricultural Districts, (2) to Manufacturing Districts, (3) to Cities; Improvement in the system of Common Schools.

Under the last head, certain features are proposed as desirable to be incorporated into their system.

"I. The territorial organization and administrative agencies of our common schools should be made more simple and efficient.

"II. The means provided for the support of common schools should be increased, and should be raised and appropriated in such ways as to awaken the highest degree of parental and public interest, and secure the greatest practicable equality of the best school privileges to all the children of the State."

"III. A broad and liberal system of measures should be adopted by the State, to provide a supply of well qualified teachers, and to exclude from the common schools all persons who do not possess the requisite moral character, 'aptness to teach' and govern children, literary attainments, and professional experience."

"IV. Uniformity of text books."

"V. A law to make it imperative on towns and districts to provide suitable school-houses, furniture and appendages for the same, apparatus and school library."

The Reports of the Institutes are arranged topically, and they may be read with profit by most teachers of large experience, as well as by those just entering upon the duties of the profession. It is hoped that the pages of this Journal may be enriched with somewhat extended extracts from them.

But valuable as this publication is, its preparation constituted but a fraction of Mr. Barnard's labor for the year. He has put in motion and superintended a very comprehensive system of operations, whereby an impulse in the line of improvement has been communicated to nearly every teacher and every district in the State. If these agencies are continued, the time is not distant when the schools of Connecticut will stand in the foremost rank.

By a resolution of the General Assembly, the Superintendent was authorized to prepare and publish a series of essays, in which the most important topics of school organization and instruction should be discussed. The friends of popular education will be glad to learn that two of the proposed Essays are now ready for publication, viz.:—I. Practical Illustrations of the Principles of School Architecture, 176 pp., 150 illustrations. II. Normal Schools in the United States, 200 pp.

J. D. P.

## A PUBLIC LIBRARY.

[The following is an extract from a letter of Mr. EDWARD EVERETT to the Mayor of Boston, on the expediency of a public library, dated June 7th, 1851.]

IN the letter which I had the honor of addressing to you on the 7th of August last, I spoke of such a library as the completion of that noble system of public instruction which reflects so much honor upon the city and does so much to promote its prosperity. I am anxious to give greater prominence to this view of the subject than it has yet received.

The city of Boston expends annually, I believe, a larger sum for schools and school-houses, in proportion to its population, than any city in Europe. Nothing like the same sum is appropriated by the city of London for these purposes. By this noble liberality the means are provided for giving our children of both sexes a good education up to the age of sixteen or seventeen. This is done at the public expense and for public motives. Individuals, as such, have no more claim upon the public for their education than for their board and clothing. The first principles of popular government require that the means of education should, as far as possible, be equally within the reach of the whole population. This can be effected in no other way than by a system of education supported by the public. The same great motive of public policy requires that the schools should be of a very superior order, so that every child may receive not merely an education, but an excellent education; as good as could be got at the best and most expensive private schools. I know of no place where these principles are so thoroughly carried out as in Boston; in other words, where so great an equality exists in reference to the inestimable benefit of an early education.

This however is the case only up to the age when school education is at an end. We provide our children with the elements of learning and science, and put it in their power by independent study and research to make farther acquisitions of useful knowledge from books — but where are they to find the books in which it is contained? Here the whole principle of equality sadly fails. The sons of the wealthy alone have access to well-stored libraries; while those whose means do not allow them to purchase books are too often debarred from them at the moment when they would be the most useful. We give them an elementary education, impart to them a taste and inspire them with an earnest desire for further attainment, — which unite in making books a necessary of intellectual life, — and then make no provision for supplying them.

I would not overrate the importance of book-learning. It is of little value without original inquiry and original thought. But good books are the record of the original inquiry and thought of able men ; — which surely do not lose their value by being put upon paper for the benefit of others. Every one regards an opportunity of personal intercourse with men eminent for talent and learning as a great privilege and source of improvement ; — to study their works is most effectually to cultivate this intercourse. It is generally impossible, from the nature of the case, to have personal intercourse with any persons of eminence, except a very few of our own countrymen and contemporaries. By books we get access to the great men of every country and every age.

Is it not then a reproach to our city, that, — as far as the means of carrying on the great work of instruction beyond the limits of school education are concerned, — no public provision exists in favor of those unable to indulge in what is now the expensive luxury of a large library ? Where is the young engineer, machinist, architect, chemist, engraver, painter, or student in any of the professions, or any of the exact sciences, or any branch of natural history, or of moral or intellectual philosophy, to get access to the books which are absolutely necessary to enable him to pursue his inquiries to any advantage ? There are no libraries in Boston which, strictly speaking, are public. The library of the Athenæum and other similar collections are private property. They are administered with all practical liberality ; but are not and cannot be open to the public. Nothing is left to young men who cannot afford to buy books, but to borrow them of individuals ; a very precarious and inadequate dependence, and one of which but very few can take advantage.

For these reasons I cannot think that a public library, well supplied with books in the various departments of art and science, and open at all times for consultation and study to the citizens at large, is absolutely needed to make our admirable system of public education complete ; and to continue in some good degree through life that happy equality of intellectual privileges which now exists in our schools, but terminates with them. And I feel confident that with such moderate coöperation as I have indicated on the part of the city, reliance may be safely placed upon individuals to do the rest. The public library would soon become an object of pride to the citizens of Boston ; and every one would feel it an honor to do something for its increase.